



Associated Press

Juanita: Defector in the family

CUBA:

A Sister's View

Three years ago, when Fidel Castro finally made the dramatic admission "I am a Marxist-Leninist," Juanita Castro, one of his four sisters, was watching the telecast with a friend. "This is the saddest day of my life," she said, and spent the rest of the day in tears. In fact, however, Juanita, who had acted as a courier for Fidel during his fight against Batista, was already working with her brother's enemies.

A shy, religious girl who had a good business head but few boy friends, Juan-

ita never shared Fidel's fascination with the extreme left. "I'm bourgeois," she once told her brother. "I don't like Communists." As early as 1960, she began feeding occasional "tidbits" of information to U.S. journalists and diplomats.

Although she apparently never indulged in what would have been the supreme irony—serving as an active CIA agent against her brother—Juanita did provide money, food, and hiding places to members of Cuban underground groups. After their mother died last August, Fidel personally ordered his sister's house watched.

Flight: Last week, Juanita, now 31, suddenly flew to Mexico City. "I have broken all bonds with Fidel and Raúl," Juanita told a televised news conference. Occasionally dabbling at her eyes, she accused Fidel of selling out to the Russians and directing the Communist subversion of Latin America. "Cuba is an immense prison surrounded by water," she declared.

At the end of her fifteen-minute statement, Juanita went into hiding. She was, her friends said, unhappy, confused, and apprehensive about her brother's reaction. That was not long in coming. Juanita's denunciation, scoffed Fidel, "was written in the U.S. Embassy." Personally, he admitted, her action was "very bitter" for him. But then, with a characteristic sense of history—or delusion of grandeur—he reminded newsmen that even Abraham Lincoln's family was divided by the Civil War.